

# Methamphetamine

## Methamphetamine...

Methamphetamine is a strong central nervous system stimulant. It produces a temporary state of increased energy, suppressed appetite, and elevated mood. Pure methamphetamine powder is white, odorless and bitter-tasting. Illicit preparations are off-white or yellowish powders, crystals, or chunks. They are sometimes packaged as tablets or capsules. Users commonly swallow methamphetamine powder, sniff it, or inject it intravenously. People can become addicted to methamphetamine. Withdrawal symptoms include fatigue, long but disturbed sleep, strong hunger, acute depression, anxiety, and mood swings.

## Short-term Effects...

Methamphetamine causes a wave of physical and psychological exhilaration, commonly called a "rush." It releases stored energy from body reserves through chemical reactions with the nervous system. Methamphetamine produces an effect similar to the body's own adrenaline or epinephrine.

Low to moderate doses can cause:

- enhanced alertness, energy and talkativeness
- a sense of well-being and heightened mood
- elevated body temperature and blood pressure
- increased heart and respiratory rates
- a need to perform tasks repeatedly
- confusion and anxiety
- dizziness, headaches, palpitations, and tremors

With higher doses, the user may feel extremely anxious and irritable. Some users experience auditory and visual hallucinations as well as a sensation similar to "coke bugs." They believe that insects are crawling under their skin and may pick at their bodies until the skin is raw and bleeding. Some feel a sense of power and mastery, often linked with an opposite sense of paranoia. Binges frequently produce severe agitation, headaches, restlessness, and sometimes violence.

## Long-term Effects...

Chronic use of methamphetamine is usually marked by rapid weight loss as the body burns itself up. Chronic users do not replenish their energy reserves because of the insomnia and suppressed appetite caused by the drug. Continued use results in severe vitamin and mineral deficiencies and an increased susceptibility to disease.

Other physical effects of long-term use may include:

- poor coordination, tremors, and blurred vision
- high blood pressure and pulse
- chronic fever and excessive perspiration
- dry mouth and skin, body sores and hives
- problems with the immune system
- damage to neurochemicals
- damage to internal organs, especially the brain

## More Facts...

### About Ice...

Ice is an extremely pure (98-100%) smokable form of methamphetamine. Also called crystal, glass or batu, it looks like chunks of clear to yellowish rock candy. Ice first appeared in the U.S. in Hawaii in 1986.

Ice produces a high that lasts longer than some other drugs and is highly addictive. It produces intense effects with an almost instant onset. Because of its purity, an overdose is more likely to result in seizures, cardiac or respiratory arrest, high fevers, coma, and death.

### Long-term Psychological Effects...

- compulsive talkativeness
- restlessness and irritability
- impaired perception and thought processes
- visual and auditory hallucinations
- memory loss and mental confusion

### An Overdose of Meth Can Cause...

- delirium and panic
- irregular heart beat and high blood pressure
- circulatory collapse
- nausea and vomiting
- seizures, coma, and death

### Danger! Danger! Danger!

Driving a vehicle (car, bike, snowmobile or boat) or operating machinery while under the influence of methamphetamine is dangerous. While the drug may induce a temporary state of awareness, it simply masks fatigue. Use of this drug also interferes with concentration, impairs vision, judgement and coordination; and increases the driver's tendency to take risks.

The use of methamphetamine can increase an individual's risk of developing AIDS. A drug user's lifestyle of poor nutrition and insufficient sleep leaves them susceptible to disease. The user may also become infected from contaminated needles or engaging in unsafe sexual practices.

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